

fortnight

There was the night when I was young and free.

And I know that it's gone now and I can't find it.

Oh how my soul is at ease when I think of you.

Fortnight

by
Proto-type Theater

On 17 October 2011, a group of Lancastrians engaged on a 14-day theatrical intervention into their daily lives that asked them to be creative, responsive and playful.

They sent and received emails, SMSes, MMSes, post and tweets, and visited interactive objects hidden throughout the city.

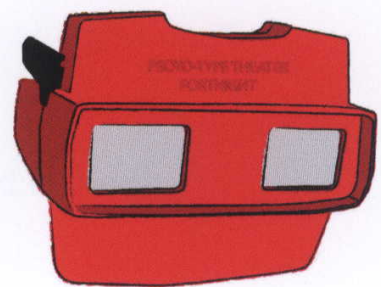
This is a book that chronicles some of what happened.

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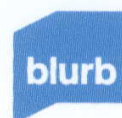
Fortnight is a Nuffield New Works Commission from Nuffield Theatre Lancaster. Commissioned by Mayfest and Watershed.

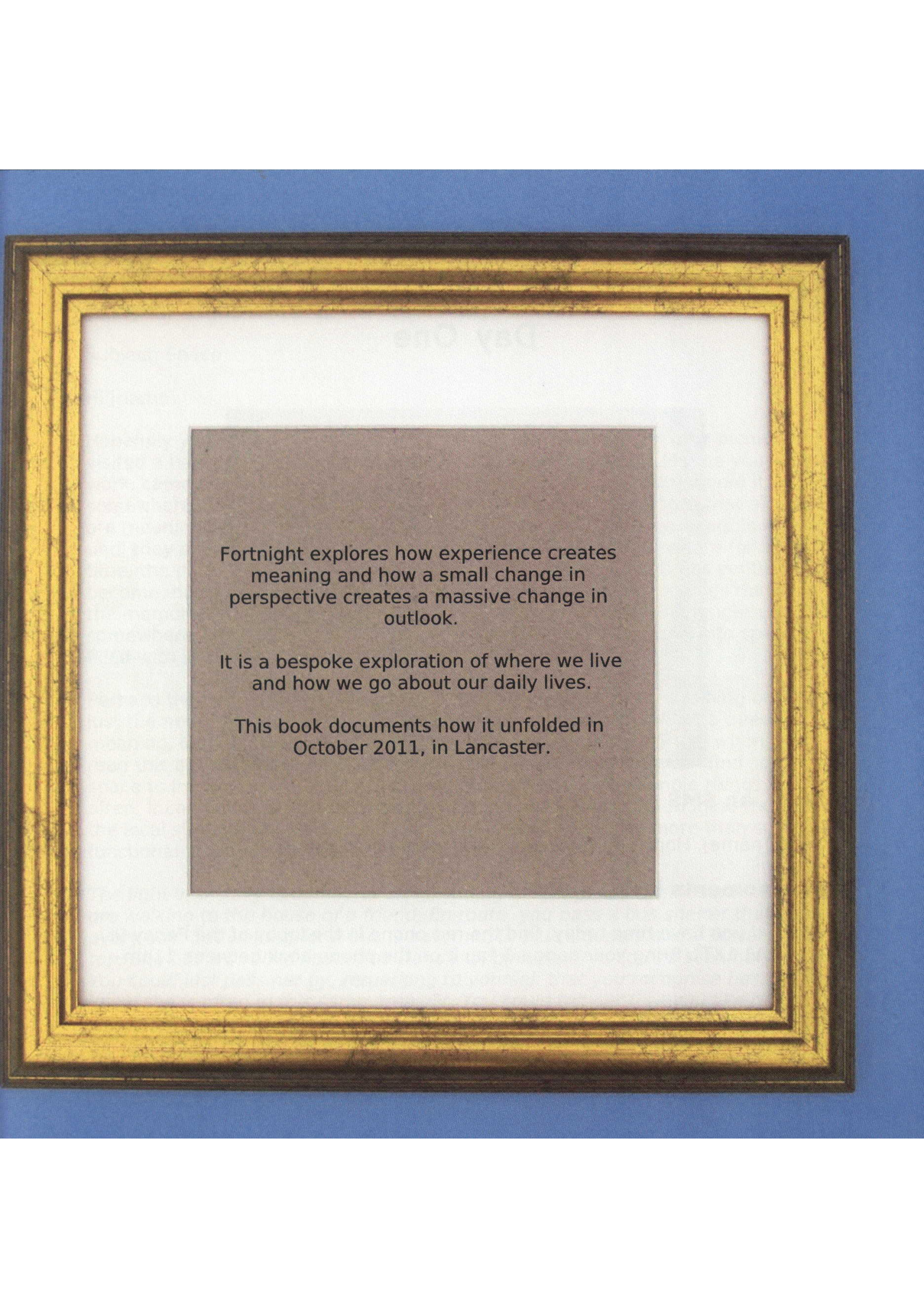
Fortnight was a 2010 Theatre Sandbox commission in partnership with Bristol Old Vic and has been co-commissioned by Contact Theatre.

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Fortnight explores how experience creates
meaning and how a small change in
perspective creates a massive change in
outlook.

It is a bespoke exploration of where we live
and how we go about our daily lives.

This book documents how it unfolded in
October 2011, in Lancaster.

Day One



At 9am, an SMS

Morning [name]. Hope you have found your delivery. It's starting...

A few moments later, an SMS

Hi again. If you have time today, find the red phone in the lobby of the Penny St Bridge (LA1 1XT). Bring your badge & tap it on the phone book between 11am–8pm.

In the lobby of the Penny St Bridge, a red phone asked participants questions about where the best place in Lancaster is to do a variety of playful activities. The answers were recorded for later use...

At 9pm, an Email

Subject: Space

Hi [name],

Hopefully your Monday was suitably relaxing. Maybe you went on a picnic, or visited a hotel, or lounged around the house in your pyjamas. Maybe you went to work, came home and settled onto the sofa. Whatever you did, you did it somewhere. That's obvious, of course... Someone once suggested that all places are meaningless until someone uses them... they are simply geographic markers until they become a space for something. When you live somewhere for a long time, the places that you regularly pass through or only sometimes venture to, become marked by the things that happen there and become spaces that hold the memories (or potential memories) of how you use them. The longer you live somewhere, the more that the places that mark it on a map, turn into spaces filled with images, ideas, experiences.

Perhaps the metaphor 'I need a bit of space', then, refers to something other than just the need for distance. Maybe a need for space could be about a need for meaning. Maybe tonight, as you think about sleeping (or tomorrow when you read this at breakfast, or whenever you check this email), you can find some space to imagine what potential meanings there are in the simple things you do often. It can become a game where you challenge yourself to imagine the visit to the local shop, the bus ride into town, or a visit to a gym, as more than something functional and instead something poetic. Imagine this:

The light in the sky is dim – it is either fading or rising, you aren't sure – and you are walking to the house of a friend. En route, you pass a bus shelter that you see every day. Sat waiting for a bus is a woman in blue trousers and a flowery pink top. She has a birdlike nest of hair and rich pink lipstick. You've seen her before. You could just pass her by, remarking to yourself that you recognise her, that you know she is often in this same area. Or. You could tell her that you like her hair or ask her the time, or simply say 'evening'. You do. You say 'evening' and she doesn't reply. Or. She says 'yes, of course it is'. You keep on walking.



It isn't a substantial interaction; it's trivial, in fact, but now this bus shelter is marked by your interaction with the woman with the nest of hair. You know her voice. You know how she responds to people she doesn't know. It isn't substantial, and you might forget it as soon as it happens. But you don't have to... you could linger on the experience and allow it to change the flow of your movement. Maybe it could even erase some nagging thought in your brain, something unsettling.

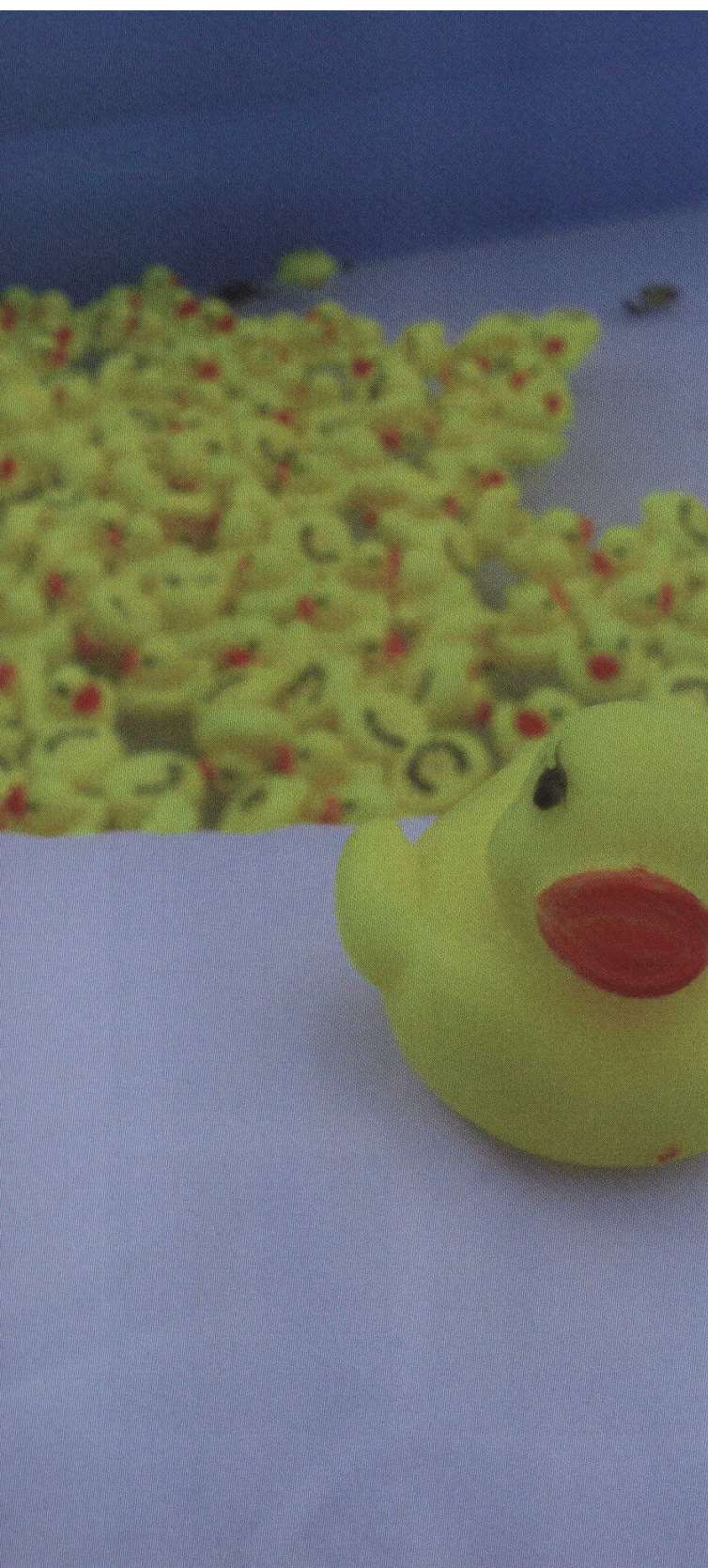
Maybe you can allow it to irritate you that she didn't respond the way you hoped she would. Regardless, even this tiniest thing makes a shift in how a place you know well transforms itself into a space of meaning.

You might think you know Lancaster. You do, in fact. You know where the best place to see two old people kissing is. You know where the worst neighbourhood is. You know where the best place is to see a beautiful sunset. But what you know is only a fragment. The more you challenge yourself to shift how you move through where you move, the more the city will move you. Maybe this is obvious too.

Dream well, if you read this at night. Happy Tuesday, if you read this in the morning. If it's afternoon, or even evening on Tuesday, well, then, hopefully this email has put a brief pause on your day... long enough for a bit of spaciousness to emerge. When you get this, feel free to send back your thoughts. A reply is always welcome.

x

p.s. if you haven't already, you can tweet about your day using lancsfortnight as the username and [removed] as the password



Proto-type Theater's
Fortnight

By

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With

Adam York Gregory, David McBride and
Katie Liana Riley

In collaboration with
matter2media

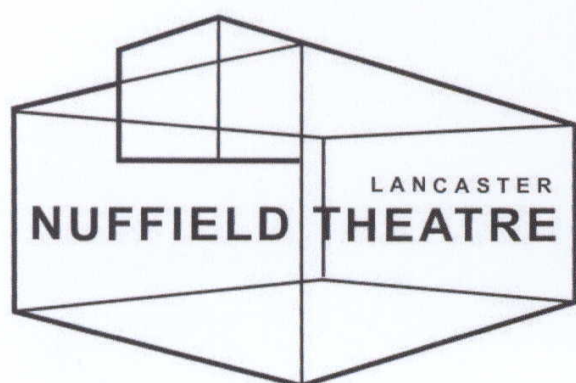
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Westerside

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Hotel, The Peter Scott Gallery, Eleanor
White, Staff at Lancaster Train Station,
The Dukes, The Assembly Rooms,
Lancaster Library, Hannah and staff at
The Borough, David Chandler, Evelyn,
Maja Bugge, Joel Love and staff at The
Priory, Michelle Cooper and staff at The
Maritime Museum and Mandy Holten at
St.John's Church.

*Images in this book are from Proto-
type, Adam York Gregory, Allison Hui
and the participants of Fortnight.*

proto-type theater



Mayfest

WATERSHED



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